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10/780,262	02/17/2004	Lili Qiu	M1103.70167US00	3432

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EXAMINER

WU, JIANYE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2616

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/780,262

Applicant(s)

QIU ET AL.

Examiner

Jianye Wu

Art Unit

2616

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/17/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. **Claims 21-22** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 21 and **22** recite the limitation "the set of nodes" in line 6 and line 7 in the claim respectively. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim, and since there can be many sets of nodes reachable via the wireless link, "the set of nodes" is indefinite.

For purpose of continuation of the prosecution, " the set of nodes" is being interpreted as -- a set of nodes --.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.

Art Unit: 2616

3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

4. **Claims 1-2, 9, 16 and 21-27** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chow (US 6771966 B1, hereinafter **Chow**).

For **claims 1 and 16**, Chow discloses a method and computer-readable medium containing instructions for determining placement of internet taps (ITAPS) in a multi-hop wireless mesh network, wherein the network employs a contention based media access control (MAC) protocol and the network comprises nodes and links between the nodes, the method comprising:

accepting connectivity information for the network (node site information, col. 20, line 61), and a set of potential ITAPs (communication nodes, col. 1, line 60) to be opened;

iterating through the set of potential ITAPs to be opened (iterative process, col. 9, lines 66-67);

selecting an ITAP, from the set of potential ITAPs (selecting links, col. 10, line 64) to be opened, to be added to a set of currently open ITAPs (the existing network), wherein the selected ITAP increases the node demands satisfied when opened together with ITAPs in the set of currently open ITAPs (make selection using the iterative process described in col. 9, lines 66-67);

adding the selected ITAP to the set of currently opened ITAPs (add the node selected by the iterative process described in col. 9, lines 66-67));

repeating the iterating, selecting, and adding until all the node demands are satisfied (repeated until satisfied, col. 9, lines 66-67); and

Art Unit: 2616

implementing the set of currently opened ITAPs in the network
(implementing the set of nodes selected by the iterating above).

Chow is **silent on** the wireless network connectivity information comprising link capacity constraints, node capacity constraints, node demands for flow.

However, the wireless network connectivity information normally comprises link capacity constraints, node capacity constraints, and node demands for flow, and Examiner takes an official notice of it.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to know that the wireless network connectivity information comprising link capacity constraints, node capacity constraints, node demands for flow.

As to **claim 2**, Chow discloses the method of claim 1 wherein the selecting is repeated until the set of potential of ITAPs to be opened is exhausted and the potential ITAP selected is the potential ITAP which maximizes the node demands satisfied (repeated until satisfied, col. 9, lines 66-67).

As to **claim 9**, Chow discloses the method of claim 1 wherein the potential ITAP selected is the first potential ITAP which increases the node demands satisfied (col. 9, lines 66-67).

For **claims 21**, a method for performing a method for reducing potential placement locations of internet taps (ITAPs) in a multi-hop wireless mesh network by identifying an equivalence class of nodes in the network which are reachable via a wireless link of the network, the method comprising:

Art Unit: 2616

accepting connectivity information for the network;
for each node in the network determining a set of nodes by which the node is reachable via the wireless link;
defining an equivalence class as a set of nodes reachable via the wireless link.

Chow teaches selecting desired location for ITAP in order to increase the coverage of service area (Col. 2, lines 47-58). The claim language is not clear and the claim language allows one to make the simplest choice of selecting "a set of nodes" for each node as a set contains the node itself only, which would defeat any benefit of defining the equivalence class. Therefore, the claim is rejected since it is disclosed by obvious to try.

For **claims 23**, a method and computer-readable medium containing instructions for reducing potential placement locations of internet taps (ITAPs) in a multi-hop wireless mesh network by identifying equivalence classes of nodes in the network which may be serviced by the same ITAP, the method comprising:

accepting equivalence class information for the network;
determining whether a first equivalence class is covered by a second equivalence class; and
eliminating the first equivalence class from consideration as a potential placement location for an ITAP if the first equivalence class is covered by the second equivalence class.

Chow teaches selecting desired location for ITAP in order to increase the coverage of service area (Col. 2, lines 47-58). If "a second equivalence class" in

Art Unit: 2616

the claim is interpreted as a chosen class whose location is selected already, what the claim teaches is to eliminate a location for an ITAP that can not provide service for more nodes, which is general knowledge in the art and is obvious to an person with ordinary skill in the art since selecting such a location would not increase the network coverage area, therefore, would not result in any benefits. Therefore, the claim is rejected since it is disclosed by general knowledge in the art.

As to **claim 24**, it is rejected for the same reason as explained in claim 23 above.

For **claim 26** a method for performing a method for supporting multi-path routing in a multi-hop wireless mesh network, wherein the network employs a contention based media access control (MAC) protocol and the network comprises nodes and links between the nodes, the method comprising:

- assigning network traffic, by a source node, to multiple network paths, wherein the assignment is made according to a specified probability;

- selecting one of the network paths;

- routing the network traffic along the selected path, wherein the source node specifies the end-to-end path; and

- forwarding the network traffic, by each intermediate node, wherein the forwarding is done according to the specified path.

This claims is rejected since Chow discloses everything (Fig. 7) in the claim. In fact, the claim language is so broad that it is within the scope of general knowledge in the art, and is well known to anyone skilled in the art.

Claims 22, 25 and 27 are the corresponding computer-readable medium claims of claim 21, 23 and 26, therefore, are rejected for the same reason explained above.

5. **Claims 3-8 and 10-15** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chow in view of Jain et al. (US 2005/0075104 A1, hereinafter **Jain**).

As to **claim 3**, Chow discloses the method of claim 2, and further teaches selecting ITAPs by computing corresponding max-flows of the network when the ITAPs are added to the network in different ways, including:

- creating a subgraph (Fig. 7) induced on a set of nodes, a set of currently opened ITAPs (solid nodes in Fig. 7), and a potential ITAP (705 of Fig. 7) to be opened;

- adding a source node, the source node having edges of capacity equal to the demand of the transformed node from the source to each node in the network; adding a destination node, the destination node having edges of capacity equal to the capacity of each currently opened ITAP and the potential ITAP to be opened, from each currently opened ITAP and the potential ITAP to be opened to the destination node; and computing the maximum flow from the source node to the destination node. (This limitation is inherent for calculating max-flow of between 2 given mobile terminals via a network. To calculate the max flow between 2 given mobile terminals via a network, one has to add the two nodes, one for each mobile terminal, to the topology of the network, then calculate the max flow between the 2 nodes).

Art Unit: 2616

Chow is **silent on** transforming each node's capacity constraint to an edge capacity constraint by replacing each node with a first node and a second node, the first node accepting all incoming edges to the transformed node and all outgoing edges from the transformed node originating from the second node, and creating a directed edge, having the node's capacity, from the first node to the second node.

However, translating bi-directional edges into directed edge is a commonly used technique for computer max-flow, as suggested by Jain ([0064]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Chow with Jain in using directed subgraph for computing the max-flow of the network in order to use network efficiently.

As to **claim 4**, Chow discloses the method of claim 2 wherein the selecting of the ITAP, from the set of potential ITAPs to be opened, which maximizes the node demands satisfied (col. 9, lines 66-67), but is **silent on** specific details. Jain teaches the details, including:

developing a linear program to compute maximum demands satisfied in the wireless neighborhood network by opening the selected ITAP in conjunction with the set of currently opened ITAPs, wherein the linear program treats throughput of a connection as independent of path length ([0042]);

modifying the linear program to ensure that flow from each node is served by independent paths (e.g., [0066]);

Art Unit: 2616

modifying the linear program to multiply the node demand by the number of independent paths (e.g., [0066]);

modifying the linear program to multiply the capacity constraints by a ratio of an over-provisioning factor to the number of independent paths; and

solving the resulting linear program.

However, the above limitations are common procedure of solving a max-flow problem as suggested by Jain (e.g., [0066]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Chow with Jain for computing the max-flow of the network in order to use network efficiently.

As to **claim 5**, Chow discloses the method of claim 2 wherein the selecting of the ITAP, from the set of potential ITAPs to be opened, which maximizes the node demands satisfied comprises satisfied (col. 9, lines 66-67), but is **silent on** specific details. Jain teaches the details, including:

finding a shortest path from demand points to opened ITAPs ([0102]);

routing one unit of flow along the shortest path ([0102]); decreasing capacities of edges on the path by one ([0088] or [0120]); and

repeating the finding, routing, and decreasing until the shortest path found has a length greater than a hop-count bound ([0003]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Chow with Jain for computing the max-flow of the network in order to use network efficiently.

Art Unit: 2616

As to **claim 6**, Chow discloses the method of claim 2 wherein the selecting of the ITAP, from the set of potential ITAPs to be opened, which maximizes the node demands satisfied (col. 9, lines 66-67), but is **silent on** specific details. Jain teaches the details, including:

- finding a shortest path from demand points to opened ITAPs ([0102]);

- routing one unit of flow along the shortest path ([0102]); decreasing capacities of edges on the path by one ([0088] or [0120]);

- repeating the finding, routing, and decreasing until no path between any demand point and any open ITAP remains (this means the demand point can't get any capacity from the network, which is an obvious reason to stop); and

- computing a demand satisfied along each path according to a throughput function.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Chow with Jain for computing the max-flow of the network in order to use network efficiently.

As to **claim 7**, Chow discloses the method of claim 2 wherein the selecting of the ITAP, from the set of potential ITAPs to be opened, which maximizes the node demands satisfied (col. 9, lines 66-67), but is **silent on** specific details. Jain teaches the details, including:

- developing a linear program to compute maximum demands satisfied in the wireless neighborhood network by opening the selected ITAP in conjunction with the set of currently opened ITAPs, wherein the linear program treats

Art Unit: 2616

throughput of a connection as a function of a number of hops the connection traverses ([0003]);

denoting an amount of flow routed through an edge based on a position of the edge along a path ([0079]);

modifying the linear program to limit the maximum flow from each node (flow constraints, [0054]); and

solving the resulting linear program.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Chow with Jain for computing the max-flow of the network in order to use network efficiently.

As to **claim 8**, Chow discloses the method of claim 2 wherein the selecting of the ITAP, from the set of potential ITAPs to be opened, which maximizes the node demands satisfied comprises:

developing a linear program to compute maximum demands satisfied in the wireless neighborhood network by opening the selected ITAP in conjunction with the set of currently opened ITAPs, wherein the linear program treats throughput of a connection as a function of a number of hops the connection traverses;

modifying the linear program to ensure that flow from each node is served by independent paths (e.g., [0066]);

modifying the linear program to multiply the node demand by the number of independent paths (e.g., [0066]);

Art Unit: 2616

modifying the linear program to multiply the capacity constraints by a ratio of an over-provisioning factor to the number of independent paths (e.g., [0098]); and

solving the resulting linear program.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Chow with Jain for computing the max-flow of the network in order to use network most efficiently.

Claims 10-15 are rejected for the same reasons as explained in claims 3-8 (except for that they depend from 9 instead of 2).

6. **Claims 17-20** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chow in view of Discenzo et al., US 2004/0267395 A1 (hereinafter **Discenzo**).

For **claims 17**, it is the claim 1 with iterating through a set of time intervals.

Chow discloses everything in claim 1, but is **silent on** iterating through a set of time intervals.

However, iterating over time intervals for optimizing the object function of the system whose parameters changing with time is well known in the art, such as the one taught by Discenzo ([0123]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Chow with Discenzo for iterating over time intervals for optimization.

Art Unit: 2616

For **claims 19**, it is rejected for the same reason explained in claim 17 above because it is a minor modification of claim 17 with objective being "largest node demand" instead of "total of node demands".

Claims 18 and 20 are the corresponding computer-readable medium claims of claim 17 and 19, therefore, are rejected for the same reason explained above.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jianye Wu whose telephone number is (571)270-1665. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Seema Rao can be reached on (571)272-3174. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service

Art Unit: 2616

Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Jianye Wu

08/02/07



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